

Press Release

Final Symposium of the ByeDV project on 6th March 2023 “Take Action! Against Cyber Sexual Violence”

Düsseldorf, 6th March 2023

Mediatized sexualised violence against children and young people is currently one of the major social challenges worldwide. More than 350 participants from Germany and neighbouring European countries testified to the great relevance of the topic for educational and psychosocial practice, science, authorities and politics.

The digital symposium marked the conclusion of the practical research project ByeDV (Beyond Digital Violence – Capacity Building for Relevant Professionals Working with Children and Young People Who Experienced Sexualised Violence Using Digital Media; www.byedv.de/en). In cooperation with five specialised counselling centres, the SRH University of Applied Sciences Heidelberg – Faculty of Social Sciences and Law and the DGfPI – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Prävention und Intervention bei Kindesmisshandlung, -vernachlässigung und sexualisierter Gewalt e.V. (German Society for Prevention and Intervention in Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexualised Violence) – developed quality criteria for the implementation of action strategies for dealing with mediatized sexualised violence against children and young people professionally. The special feature of this project was that it focused on the situation of those affected by mediatized violence and developed professional standards for counselling, but also for prevention. The symposium focused on the presentation of the project results based on selected quality criteria. Prof. Dr. Frederic Vobbe and Katharina Kärgel from the SRH University of Applied Sciences Heidelberg also took a look at the process of dialogue between research and practice in developing these criteria.

Kerstin Claus, the Independent Commissioner for Child Sexual Abuse (UBSKM) opened the event with her greeting and spoke in favour of the EU Commission's proposals to better protect children and young people from sexualised violence. This was followed by a statement by Wibke Müller, a member of the UBSKM's Council of Victims and co-founder of the BeBrave Movement international, and Mié Kohiyama, BeBraveFrance, on the need to cooperate more strongly internationally against mediatized sexualised violence and to take responsibility. Cathrin Bauer-Bulst, Head of Unit “Security in the Digital Age” at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, provided information on the EU's strategy for combating child sexual abuse more effectively.

This was followed by keynotes addressing the fight against mediatized sexualised violence at different levels. Denise Michels explained the tasks of the newly established Federal Centre for Child and Youth Media Protection (BZKJ). Jana Schrempp presented the child rights-based approach of ECPAT international and gave insights into their networking work. Berta Vall (Universitat Lluís Companys, Spain) reported on the EU-funded prevention project CONSENT, which is directed against peer violence among young people and is carried out in schools. Elena Gajotto (Working With Perpetrators Network) informed about the EU project DeStalk, which uses



AI to combat mediatised violence against women. The federal model project #UNDDU? was presented by Julia von Weiler (Innocence in Danger e.V.). The project also focuses on peer violence and includes a campaign as well as workshops for young people, information for adults and a help app for victims of mediatised sexualised violence.

The quality criteria developed in the project for dealing with circulating images and video recordings (Katharina Kärgel, Frederic Vobbe, SRH University of Applied Sciences and Arts Heidelberg), cybergrooming (Julia Hopf, Child and Youth Protection Service Känguru Weimar/Maj Walter, Wildwasser Marburg), a trauma-sensitive attitude (Sonja Kroggel, Ralph Bruder, Child Protection Centre Ulm/Neu-Ulm), working with perpetrators (Marco Roock, Counselling Centre Anstoß/Männerbüro Hannover e. V.) and prevention (Claudia Roock, Counselling Centre Anstoß/Männerbüro Hannover e. V.) were discussed in workshops. V.) and prevention (Claudia Wienand, Anna Polzin, Frauen gegen Gewalt Westerbürg e.V./Präventionsbüro Ronja). Jana Schrempp from ECPAT focused on protective measures on the internet. With regard to the topic of mediatised sexualised violence, Heike Holz (Petze e.V.) and Christin Pontius (DGfPI e.V.) discussed protection in schools. Yvonne Oeffling (AMYNA e.V.) and Ulrike Mund (DGfPI e.V.) delved into digital aspects in the development of protection concepts.

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